HARAMBEE FLAME

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H.A.C.O. FALL SYMPOSIUM

On the evening of October 20th. we held our Fall symposium, the theme for which was "Afrikans In America/Who We Are." Barbara Hewins-Maroney of the U.N.O. Office of Special Programs and Jimmy Smith of the U.N.L. Dept. of Multi-Cultural Affairs, following a brief but enlightening address by Chairman Chico Wilson on the aims and objectives of the Harambee Afro-Cultural Organization, spoke to us on a number of issues raised by the symposium theme. For example, it was pointed out very graphically by Brother Smith that Black people in this country are not making any economic gains relative to the U.S. population as a whole, that the gap between the median incomes of White people and Black folks has widened, not narrowed as apologists for the Status Quo would have us believe. He also discussed the question of Black Gross National Product, emphasizing that, though quite a lot of money goes through our hands, little of it stays in our communities. Jimmy cited a figure of 10% as being the portion of our GNP which is spent on the purchase of alcoholic beverages. His address to us was a sobering one, one which left no doubt that Afrikans in America are in some troubled times.

Barbara's approach was different. She had taken the question of who we are as Afrikans in America and asked other Sisters to respond to it. She shared the responses with us and expanded on the views they depicted and situations which they addressed. The Black women with whichSister Maroney spoke offered perspectives that ranged from hopeless to pragmatic to optimistic. Most if not all of the women expressed at least some concern about the present state of relations between Black Women and Black men.

The fact that the question of who we are as Afrikans in America was addressed both from a female and male perspective permitted our membership and guests to get a more insightful picture of our situation than would have been provided otherwise. And we thank Brother Smith and Sister Maroney for making their presentations, for the obvious work of preparation, and for their reliability generally in helping us when we call on them.

WHAT DO YOUNG BLACK MEN AND WOMEN LOOK FOR IN A MATE

The following was provided to us by Barbara Hewins-Maroney and was excerpted from the Spring 1980 issue of Western Journal of Black Studies. The items are listed numerically in order of importance to the Black men and women surveyed. The survey was conducted among Black students.

Males	Desirable Traits	Females
23	Ability To Dance	23
1	Kind & Considerate	2
2	Understanding	5
8	Mutual Affection	4
5	Emotional Maturity	7
4	Good Health	9
3	Ability To "Move Ahead"	6
7	Neatness & Retirement	11
13	Work & Save	3
9	Dependability	10
12	Pay Bills	1
6	Ownership Of Home	8
10	Sexual Attraction	16
15	Liking For People	12
14	Sense Of Humor	14
16	Desire Children	13
18	Kind Of Job	15
17	Ambition For Social Status	7
11	Good Cook	22
19	College Degree	18
20	Similar Education	19
22	Similar Religion	20
21	Political Philosophy	21

A MEMBER COMMENTS ON WHAT IT MEANS TO BE BLACK IN AMERICA

Who am I? I have no manhood. You made my woman head of the house. You have oriented me so that I hate and distrust my Brothers and Sisters. You mispronounce my name(Mayberry, Jones, Smith, ...These are not names of my people.). You say I have no self-respect while you deny me an adequate education to enable me to compete with you on equal terms for the fruits of "the good life." You say I have no dignity while you have deprived me of knowledge of my culture. To you I am a low-down dog. To me your promise of change has dragged on for far too long.

I am a Black man in America. I and we need to know that we are not alone. We, Black men and Black women, must love each other because, as we look around us, we see that this is really all we have and that anything else can only be obtained through the unity that love brings.

-Floyd Mayberry

REFLECTIONS ON THE ELECTIONS

Ronald Reagan has been elected President. What does it mean? Probably not much of significance. It is not the President who runs this country's affairs but the nation's corporate structure. On a more visible level it is congress. And it is this that we should be looking at in examining the election results. Redneck conservatism had a field day in this election. This will mean decrease in or cut-off of funding for government programs that superficially aid the poor, possibly an increase in police powers, more visible intervention by the U.S. in the affairs of other less powerful nations, and other manifestations of what we have learned to identify with conservative thought and policy.

But are there other things about this past election that should concern us? Some people would suggest that a great concern should be the large number of people who did not vote. They would shake their heads in disappointment and decry "voter apathy." And certainly apathy played a part in the fact that quite a lot of people stayed away from the polls on election day. But was it apathy alone that kept these eligible voters out of the booths? Numerous opinion surveys have been conducted over the past several months that indicate that a substantial percentage of the population very simply distrusts government, believes that it doesn't make any difference whether a candidate is Democratic or Republican. And there is plenty of evidence to support such views: ABSCAM, COINTELPRO, Watergate, the consistency of the incidence of cost-"overruns" in dealings between the government and private corporations, the difference between the promises of polit ical candidates and their actual performance as political office-holders, the lack of difference(other than that of rhetoric) between actual philosophy as one moves his eyes from the Republican to the Democratic Party, etc.

What should concern us is the fact that, as the election results so clearly indicate, there is a rising to the surface of the kinds of racist and classist tendencies that are characteristic of conservative political thought. Could be dangerous times coming! -the editor

. . . . . .
. For those of you who are "Dallas" .
. addicts and are just dying to know .
. who shot J.R., you may now put .
. your anxieties to rest. Our spe- .
. cial investigative team has, after .
. several weeks of work, discovered .
. the identity of the killer. For .
. the answer to this question, see .
. the bottom of this page. .
. . . . . .

Bottom of this page→

Answer: Amy Carter

STRENGTHENING ORGANIZATIONAL MUSCLE

At a recent H.A.C.O. meeting a couple of our members raised serious and valid points worthy of our attention. Carl is one of our more impatient members. But he does raise some thought-provoking questions. At the meeting in question he struck hard and fast at our sense of competition, especially the kind of competition being exercised within the H.A.C.O. organization. This is an inter-organizational problem that can be resolved with our own resources. What I would like to deal with is the problem raised by Victor, that the Harambee Afro-Cultural Organization has thus far failed to develop the kind of visible strength that would enable us to influence prison policy as it affects Black prisoners.

H.A.C.O. can no longer be satisfied to remain a once-per-week organization. We must branch out and become an organization that affects the lives of Black prisoners here on an every-day basis, that can be a real influence on the values of these men, that can be a significant force both within and without these walls. We need to become a part of a network of organizations, linking us with organizations on the outside that we can call upon for aid when problems arise that we might be be incapable of dealing with on our own.

Most of the Brothers here will be returning to the communities whence they came. They are trying to direct their energies into more positive and constructive/productive areas. We want to be definite and definitive assets both to these Brothers and to the communities to which they will be returning. We will need your help to bring this situation about.

I am now in the process of compiling a list of outside individuals and organizations which would be available to us for purposes of seeking particular kinds of assistance for particular kinds of problems, either organizational (or otherwise collective) or individual.

Please send your name, or the name of your organization, and address and the particular category of your function to:

Keith Askia Musa Russ #27521
H.A.C.O.
P.O. Box 2500
Lincoln, Nebraska
68502

-Askia Musa

(Editor's comment: The issues raised in this article have been recently discussed by the H.A.C.O. executive board. We spent a substantial portion of time on the question of "competition" within the organization. It was agreed upon that we should discourage competition and foster a collective spirit. Further, it was determined that criticism about "competition" within the organization is based both on the fact that we do have a small number of members who are continually floor-showing in competition with others for the attention of our outside guests(particularly the women) and on the illusion of competition in the minds of a portion of our members who feel they are being "fronted off." Over the past few months, the Educational Chairman has been accelerating the educational process for the membership through study assignments, quizzes, increased use of outside resource people to bring us information and insights, etc. Unfortunately some members have not yet figured out that it is to their advantage to know about themselves, about their collective/ Afrikan self, and about the situation we are in as a people. When discussions are had or quizzes given, these members either have nothing to say or tend to say things that have little or nothing to do with the subject at hand. The competition that these members perceive is factually a matter of others studying while they do not.

If there is any question in any member's mind about H.A.C.O. being serious about the intellectual growth of our membership and its increased loyalty to Black people and our collective interests, may those questions be erased.)

MEMORIES

Slow-riding on Haight and Fillmore
Kids selling Ritalin and Quaaludes,
Early in the morning
Before the sharks come out,
Rough hustle...

Easing on through the Mission
Caught in the quicksand of police,
Somebody must have
Done somebody wrong,
No breakfast...

Cruising down Market
Lunch at Union Square,
With today's
Two bellydancers,
No fags...

Down through the Tenderloin
Ladies been out all night,
They don't see no reason
To stop now,
making money...

Slowly through Chinatown
Show the proper respect,
Nothing here
Is what it appears to be,
Move carefully...

Columbus and Broadway
Long black Cadillacs, shoulder holsters,
Victim outlines
Painted on the sidewalk,
No mistakes...

Winding up Colt Tower
Gazing through the binoculars,
Watching the sun set
Under the gate,
No tears...

Escape tonight to Palo Alto
Jazz and conversation,
Good coke
And scotch to brood over,
Another day,
...Some other day.

-Robert Thomas

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A WEB

Torn inside and out
Confused by perplexities
Knowing not where to go
Baffled by a maze of directions
Of situations
To turn to
To turn from
Intrigued but confused
Exploring deep inside
But finding no end
Yet time has come
With full lustre and ripeness
I step forward once again
Only to stumble
Be mangled
In the tangles of indecision.

-Pamela Washington

LIFE CYCLE

Couple
Love
Make
Love
Sweat
Groan
Cry
Pain...

Baby
Grows
Learns
Love
Wonders
Finds
Things
Out...

Man/Woman
Work
Meet
Mate
Party
Make
Love
Baby
Marry
Wait
On
God.

-Yahya Ali(John Berry)